



**IDS 2935 (Quest 2):
RELIGION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
Summer A 2023**

Instructor

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12:30-1:30 (in Anderson 105)

Teaching Assistants

Our class benefits from the skill and expertise of three teaching assistants. Each will lead three discussion sections, which will meet on Fridays. All our TAs are Ph.D. students in the Department of Religion.

Ms. Rajani Maharjan – office hours TBD

Mr. Prathik Murali – office hours TBD

Ms. Carol Rodriguez – office hours TBD

Class Schedule and Locations

Monday and Wednesday: Lecture 3rd period (11:00-12:15), McCarty Hall A, Room G186
Tuesday and Thursday: Discussions – multiple times and locations
Friday: Asynchronous learning

I. DESCRIPTION

This class explores the role of religion in movements for social change, in the US and globally. We will address core questions in the study of social movements – how movements emerge, why people join, how they mobilize resources, what strategies and tactics they employ, and what goals they seek – by examining a range of case studies, many of which will be selected by students. In looking at these various movements, we will pay particular attention to the distinctive ways in which religion influences their formation, identity, practices, and outcomes.

My hope is that this class provides you with useful “real world skills” by helping you, first, to understand how people organize for social change and second, to “see” religion in the public sphere.

As a Quest 2 course, this class is not a broad survey but rather a focused examination of the ways that perspectives, methods, and resources from the social and behavioral sciences can help us understand and address real-world issues. It will be organized around a number of guiding questions:

- How and why do people organize collectively to address social problems?
- How do religious ideas, communities, and leaders contribute to social movements?
- How do faith-based movements contribute to the solution of social problems?
- What methods and sources do scholars of social movement employ to understand the movements in general and religion’s roles in particular?
- How do social movements use social media and other virtual resources in their organizing efforts?

We will explore these questions by reading literature from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including economics, history, political science, psychology, religious studies, and sociology. We will also read primary sources, including documents produced by the movements themselves and oral histories. In addition, we will examine scientific research, survey data, and other resources that movement activists use to understand the problems they are addressing, public attitudes towards these issues, and effective ways to resolve problems. Students will also engage in independent and group research throughout the semester, documenting the ways organizations and congregations are responding to contemporary challenges.

This course meets the general education requirements for Diversity (D) and Social/Behavioral Sciences (S), as well as 2000 words towards the university writing requirement. It also counts as an elective for Religion majors and minors and for students pursuing the Ethics and Society certificate. Please see separate sheet for Quest and General Education goals, objectives, and learning outcomes.

Writing Requirement

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. This course carries 2000 words that count towards the University Writing Requirement. You must minimum grade of C (2.0) for the

course. It is possible to fail to meet the writing requirement and still earn a minimum grade of C in a class, so students should review their degree audit after receiving their grade to verify receipt of credit for the writing component. The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written work with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support (when appropriate), style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics, using the writing rubric attached to this syllabus. More specific guidelines for individual assignments will be provided later in the semester.

I encourage you to seek help from the university's Writing Studio (www.writing.ufl.edu), which offers support for writing in all fields and can be very helpful both in developing your first drafts and in polishing those drafts.

I recommend the Chicago manual of style (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>) as a guide for writing format and style. However, you may use a different style guide, as long as you check with me first and make sure to use the same format consistently.

II. CLASS POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. *Attendance and Participation*: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Please let me know about any planned absences (for religious holidays, athletic events, or other reasons) as soon as possible. For unplanned absences (due to illness or emergency), please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation (e.g, doctor's note).

2. *Make-up policy*: I will arrange for a make-up or early in-class exam with sufficient notice. If you have an emergency that requires you to miss an assignment, please contact me as soon as you are able. If you do not receive an extension from the instructor, assignment will be marked down a half grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

3. *Honor Code*: The [honor code](#) applies to this and all courses taken at UF: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines may result in judicial action and sanctions, as specified in the [Student Conduct Code](#).

4. *Accommodation for Disabilities*: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

5. *Counseling and Emergency Resources*: Please let me know if you need support facing challenges that affect your academic performance. There are many resources available for students, and I will be glad to help you get the assistance you need in order to thrive at UF. Some resources include:

- a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;
- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.
- e. For security issues, please contact the University Police Department: 392-1111, or 911 for general emergencies.

6. *Software Use*: All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

7. *COVID policies*: In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

* If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for screening/testing and vaccination opportunities.

* If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.

* Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

III. ASSIGNMENTS, READINGS, AND SCHEDULE

Readings

All required readings will be available on our course Canvas site or online.

If possible, I recommend that you purchase Paul Almeida, *Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization* (California, 2019), which is an excellent introduction to the study of social movements. I have posted the required chapters on Canvas, but you will find the rest of the book very helpful if you are able to read it.

Required Assignments

1. Active, informed *participation* in class discussions, in both the lecture sections on Mondays and Wednesdays and the discussion sections on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You should complete

all assigned readings, podcasts, and/or videos BEFORE the relevant lecture or discussion section.

2. *Two short essays* based on the readings (1000 words min each), due Sunday, May 28 (on the social movement theories) and Sunday, June 11 (on religion's role in social movements); 30% of total grade each.

Assignments 3 and 4 will be based on your engagement with a specific movement.

Working in small groups, students will choose an organization or religious community to study. We will select movements to study in discussion sections on May 24. These movements will be the basis for our examination of case studies in the last half of the class.

You are encouraged to conduct primary research to the extent possible, including analysis of primary documents and social media, interviews, and participant-observation. Your research will support several assignments, both individual and collective:

3. *Annotated selection of article(s) or chapter*, due by midnight on Friday, 6/2. 10% of total grade. Select a scholarly article or book chapter or several journalistic pieces (totaling at least 15 pages) on the social movement that your group is studying. Write about a page (2-3 paragraphs) summarizing the reading, including a short description of the movement; an analysis of the authors' perspectives, sources, and methods; and the most important points you learned from it. We will use these sources for our discussion of case studies in Module 3 (weeks 4-6).

4. *Poster or podcast* (group project) about the movement, addressing the origins, strategies, and goals, due by midnight, June 21. 15% of total grade.

5. *Research report* (individual project). Write a report on your experience researching a contemporary movement (about 750-1000 words), due June 23. 15% of total grade.

SCHEDULE

MODULE ONE: UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The first module provides an introduction to the study of social movements. We will learn about major themes, theories, and methodologies used to identify and analyze different kinds of movements. We will pay particular attention to the ways that religion is and is not considered in this scholarship.

Week One

Mon. 5/15 Lecture: Introduction to the class

Tues. 5/16 Discussion sections: Getting to know each other

Wed. 5/17 Lecture: Introduction to the study of social movements

Read: Paul Almeida, Chapter 1: “Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Action” and Chapter 2: “How to Study Social Movements,” in *Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

Thurs. 5/18 Discussion sections

In small groups, make a list of all the contemporary social movements you can think of, in the US and globally. Why did these movements form? What are they trying to achieve? Who organized them? What resources do they use? What impact have they had?

Fri. 5/19 Asynchronous learning: The variety of religiously-based movements

Watch:

Kal Penn, [Gandhi’s Salt March](#)

Martin Luther King, Jr., [“I Have a Dream”](#)

Read: Oscar Romero’s Third Pastoral Letter

Week Two

Mon. 5/22 Lecture: Social movement theories

Read: Almeida, “Chapter 3: Theories of Social Movements”

Recommended: Almeida, “Ch. 5: The Framing Process”

Tues. 5/23 Discussion sections: How do movements frame their identities and goals?

Activity: Small group analysis of movement websites and social media accounts. Each group will choose a movement to analyze.

Wed. 5/24 Lecture: Social movements and the COVID pandemic

Read: Jonathan Pinckney and Miranda Rivers, “Sickness or Silence: Social Movement Adaptation to COVID 19.” *Journal of International Affairs* 73, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2020): 23-42.

Thurs. 5/25 Discussion sections: Social media and activism

Listen: Zeynep Tufeki, [Online Social Change: Easy to Organize, Hard to Win](#)

Activity: Do social media help or hinder movement organizing success?

Fri. 5/26 Asynchronous learning: Work on essays

Read: [Strunk, *Elements of Style*](#)

Sun 5/28 First paper due at midnight

MODULE TWO: UNDERSTANDING RELIGION'S ROLE IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

In this module, we turn to the specific ways that religion enters into social movements. We will learn about some of its most explicit and well-documented roles – e.g., as a provider of resources, leadership, audience, and ideology -- and also discuss some of the more subtle ways that religion can influence activism. Also during this module we will select the case studies and groups that will organize our work in module three.

Week Three

Mon. 5/29 **Memorial Day; no class**

Tues. 5/30 Discussion sections: How does religion influence activism?

Watch: The Pluralism Project, "[Acting on Faith](#)"

Wed. 5/31 Lecture: Studying religion in social movements

Read: [Rhys Williams, "Religion as Political Resource: Culture or Ideology?"](#) *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 35, no. 4 (Dec. 1996): 368-378.

[Gene Burns and Fred Kniss, "Religion and Social Movements,"](#) *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, ed. David Snow, Donatella della Porta, Bert Klandermans, and Doug McAdam (Blackwell, 2013).

Thurs. 6/1 Discussion sections: Select case studies and groups for final project.
If you do not attend class today, you will be assigned to a group and topic.

Fri. 6/2 Asynchronous learning: Thinking about religion, belief, and activism

Read: Jack Delehanty, "How We Think about Religion and Why it Matters for Social Movements." [Mobilizing Ideas blog.](#)

Listen: "[Activism and Belief,](#)" with Rosemary Hancock

Annotated article or chapter due by midnight, Friday, June 2.

MODULE THREE: CASE STUDIES

In the final course module, we will discuss a number of social movements in which religion plays a significant role. About half these movements will be chosen based on the annotated readings that you will submit on June 2. I will select the case studies from the readings you submit, with the goal of choosing as wide a range of issues and approaches as possible. I will update the list of topics and readings for this module by Monday 6/5. Please make sure to check so that you can complete the readings for Tuesday discussion sections.

Week Four

Mon. 6/5 Lecture: *Case study 1: The Civil Rights Movement*

Read: Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 33, No. 2 (June 2000), pp. 168- 174.

Tues. 6/6 Discussion sections: *Case study 2: Arab Spring*

Read: Michael Hoffman and Amaney Jamal, "Religion in the Arab Spring: Between Two Competing Narratives." 2014. *The Journal of Politics* 76, No. 3 (May. 22): 593-606.

Wed. 6/7 Lecture: *Case Study 3: The art and literature of social movements*

Read: Lakshmi Subramanian, *Singing Gandhi's India - Music and Sonic Nationalism*, Chapter TBD

Thurs. 6/8 Discussion sections: *Case Study 4: TBD*

Fri. 6/9 Asynchronous learning: Work on essays

Sun. 6/11 Second paper due at midnight

Week Five

Mon. 6/12 Lecture: *Case Study 5: Progressive Religion in Central America*

Read: A. L. Peterson, *Martyrdom and the Politics of Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), Ch. 4: "Sacrifice, History, and Ritual"

Tues. 6/13 Discussion sections: *Case study 6: TBD*

Wed. 6/14 Lecture: *Case Study 7: TBD*

Thurs. 6/15 Discussion sections: *Case study 8: TBD*

Fri. 6/16 Asynchronous learning

Case Study 9: Opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline

Watch: LaPier, Rosalyn. [Understanding Native American religion is important for resolving the Dakota Access Pipeline crisis.](#) *Intercontinental Cry*, 14 Nov. 2019.

Campbell, Peter. [Those Are Our Eiffel Towers, Our Pyramids: Why Standing Rock Is about Much More than Oil.](#) *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 15 May 2017.

Watch: [Sioux Tribe Takes NODAPL to the United Nations](#)

Week Six

Mon. 6/19 Lecture: *Case study 10: TBD*

Tues. 6/20 Discussion sections: Work on group projects (posters/podcasts)

Wed. 6/21 Lecture: *Case study 11: TBD*

Wed. 6/21 Posters/podcasts due by midnight

Thurs. 6/22 Discussion sections: Presentations of posters and podcasts

Fri. 6/23 Asynchronous learning: Finish research report

Friday, 6/23 Research report due by midnight

RUBRICS AND GRADING SCALE - see separate sheets.